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15 February 1961

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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DAILY BRIEF

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Congo: The harsh tone and far-reaching demands of the Soviet Government's statement of 14 February reflect Moscow's determination to exploit Lumumba's death to discredit and terminate the UN operation in the Congo. By making demands which are probably unacceptable to the majority of UN members, the Soviet leaders are seeking to discredit Hammarskjold, exploit widespread concern over the effects of Lumumba's death, and strengthen the Soviet bargaining position in future talks on a Congo settlement. Moscow's statement probably foreshadows increased pressure on the Sudan to permit transit of Soviet aid to Stanleyville, and raises the possibility of formal Soviet recognition of Gizenga's regime.

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*Reprisals against whites for Lumumba's death may still take place,

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Hammarskjold has sent orders to UN headquarters in Leopoldville to stop all operations by the various Congolese military forces. Execution of these orders will primarily affect Mobutu's operations in Equateur Province and Tshombé's offensive in northern Katanga.

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Laos: The Soviet Union seems anxious to appear responsive to recent US statements that developments in Laos have a direct bearing on Soviet-American relations. Two senior Soviet journalists told that the USSR did not want an international crisis at this time over Laos

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Soviet Government Declaration on the Congo

The Soviet leaders obviously view Lumumba's death as providing an excellent opportunity to carry forward their campaign against colonialism and again identify the USSR with extremist, anti-Western forces in Africa and Asia.

The Soviet Government's statement of 14 February revived the harsh tone of Khrushchev's indictment of colonialism and the United Nations' role in the Congo at the General Assembly last fall. The demands made in this statement were included in the draft resolution circulated by the Soviets yesterday for presentation at the UN Security Council today. The statement and resolution suggest that the Soviet leaders may hope that Lumumba's death will lead to the collapse of the UN operation through the withdrawal of the remaining Afro-Asian contingents--most immediately those of Morocco, Ghana, and Indonesia. Moscow would exploit to the hilt the dispatch of Western troops as an attempt to reimpose colonial rule in the Congo. The Soviet leaders probably believe direct Western intervention would make it extremely difficult or impossible for the West to marshal the support of moderate Afro-Asian powers for a new approach for a Congo settlement.

The Soviet statement's call on all "freedom-loving states" to respond to the appeal for aid issued by the "legitimate government of the Congo" headed by acting premier Gizenga and the avowal of Soviet support for the Stanleyville regime appear to foreshadow formal recognition of this regime. Such a step would be calculated to bring pressure on Afro-Asian governments to follow suit and also to prepare legal justification for more vigorous bloc efforts to open a channel for extending direct aid to Gizenga's forces.

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In addition to this attempt to discredit and terminate the UN operation and block any effective Western-backed UN

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action to deal with the crisis, the Soviet leaders are seizing upon Lumumba's death as a pretext for reviving their charges against Hammarskjold. Since Khrushchev's sharp attacks on the secretary general's conduct of the UN operation, it has been apparent that Hammarskjold has been selected to serve as the scapegoat for Soviet setbacks in the Congo last fall. Moscow's latest demand for his dismissal and its declared refusal to recognize his authority as secretary general probably do not foreshadow a Soviet-led bloc withdrawal from the UN. This latest statement only makes more explicit the position Khrushchev took last fall in his pronouncements before the General Assembly. He warned at that time that Hammarskjold's failure to resign would lead the USSR to draw the "necessary conclusions" and threatened to withhold Soviet cooperation with any of his decisions. At one point, Khrushchev hinted that if Soviet demands for revamping the UN executive machinery were not accepted, the bloc might withdraw and form a separate international organization. However, he stopped short of making any specific threats or commitments on this point.

As long as he believes he has the support of the smaller UN members, Hammarskjold is unlikely to resign. However, the USSR's refusal to recognize his authority will make the conduct of UN operations more difficult.

[redacted] Hammar-
skjold has already ordered the UN force to occupy airfields and other communication centers and to set up military control points in areas of Congolese military action. The UN Command reportedly has been ordered to stop all forces engaged in offensive action but to use force only if force is used against it. However, the small size of the UN units, coupled with the equivocal nature of the directives themselves, will render effective UN control difficult. Neutralist nations reportedly believe that the Security Council should pass an emergency resolution urging that all possible measures be taken to avoid civil war and calling for the cessation of Belgian and other foreign interference. Representatives of Nigeria, a leader of moderate Afro-Asian opinion, have stated that if Hammarskjold moves rapidly to take over temporary control of the Congo,

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[Nigeria will increase its military commitment to the UN force. Otherwise, they said, the Nigerian units will be withdrawn.]

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As long as the USSR remains in the UN, it will have to conduct routine business with the Secretariat, the staff of which is predominantly loyal to Hammarskjold. The USSR vetoed the reappointment of Hammarskjold's predecessor, Trygve Lie, in October 1950, linking him to the UN action in Korea. The General Assembly later that year extended Lie's appointment for three years. The Soviet bloc responded by officially ignoring Lie as secretary general for the ensuing two years. This pressure finally forced him to resign in 1953.

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